

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 00767 030751Z

17

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CU-02 COME-00 USIA-06 RSC-01

/026 W

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R 030700Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0062

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 0767

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, XF, EGEN

SUBJECT: MPEAA FILMS

REFS: STATE 17173; JIDDA 0452

1. PAO WAS ONLY ABOE MEET BRIEFLY WITH SHUBAILY WHILE IN RIYADH. ADVISED HIM WE SAW NO POLITICAL OR RETALIATORY MOTIVATION IN MPEAA PRICE RANGE CHANGE USING REASONS OUTLINED IN PARAS 1 AND 2 REF. STATE TEL.

2. SHUBAILY LISTENED POLITELY BUT REMAINED UNCONVINCED. SAID HE HAD RECEIVED DISTINCT IMPRESSION FROM ISSAM HAMMAWI, MCA REPRESENTATIVE IN BEIRUT AND A MR. PAIGE, COLUMBIA REPRESENTATIVE IN LONDON, THAT PRICE INCREASE WAS RETALIATORY.

3. HE SAID MPEAA POLICY POSED NO REAL PROBLEM TO SAUDIS SINCE THEY WOULD NOT SWITCH TO COLOT BEFORE TWO YEARS, BUT THAT GULF STATES REALLY INCENSED BY MPEAA ACTION BECAUSE THEIR DEPENDENCY ON MPEAA FOR COLOR FILMS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT ABC, CBS, AND FOX CONTINUING TO CHARGE 120 - 160 DOLLARS PER HOUR AND THAT FOX AND PARAMOUNT HAD STRONGLY OPPOSED INCREASE.

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4. SHUBAILY CONTINUALLY REFERRED TO "UNILATERAL" ACTION OF MPEAA CLAIMING THIS INCENSED ARABS EVEN MORE THAN PRICE INCREASE. CAO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD MPEAA HAD RAISED POSSIBILITY PRICE INCREASE WITH ARAB TV OFFICIALS BEFORE OCTOBER WAR AND AT TV CONFERENCE AT CANNES IN APRIL 1974. THIS MADE LITTLE IMPRESSION ON HIM. HE HAS FIRMLY CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT NEFARIOUS MOTIVATION BEHIND INCREASE.

5. SHUBAILY MADE NO REFERENCE POSSIBILITY BOYCOTT BEING RAISED AT GULF TV MEETING IN BAHRAIN FEB 10. HE SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WAS SPEAKING AS FRIEND OF U.S. AND DID NOT WANT TO SEE ITS FILMS PRICED OUT OF GULF MARKET.

COMMENT: SHUBAILY WAS VERY RELAXED AND FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT MEETING WITH NEVER EVEN AN IMPLICATION OF THREAT OR WARNING IN HIS REMAKRS. HE'S MADE UP HIS MIND ABOUT MOTIVATION FOR PRICE INCREASE (OR SOMEBODY ELSE HAS) AND NO AMOUNT FACTS TO CONTRARY ARE GOING TO MAKE HIM CHANGE IT.
AKINS

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